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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/659,600	09/10/2003	Karl-Ernst Mack	2002DE312	5270

7590 12/06/2005

Clariant Corporation
Industrial Property Department
4000 Monroe Road
Charlotte, NC 28205

EXAMINER

DANG, THUAN D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1764

DATE MAILED: 12/06/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/659,600

Applicant(s)

MACK ET AL.

Examiner

Thuan D. Dang

Art Unit

1764

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 September 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 1-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zorn et al (3,493,626).

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Zorn discloses a process of hydrodechlorination of a chlorinated m-xylene, namely 2-chloro-m-xylene in gas phase and in the presence of a hydrogen and a platinum catalyst supported on carbon in the temperature ranging from 350-400 degree Celsius to produce pure m-xylene (the abstract; col. 1, lines 35 thru col. 2, line 4; see examples).

Zorn does not disclose that the chlorinated compound is o-xylene, the process is operated under atmospheric pressure. However, chlorinated o-xylene and chlorinated m-xylene are isomers and the pressure is a parameter of a chemical process.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill who wishes to produce o-xylene from chlorinated o-xylene in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the Zorn process by using the Zorn process to produce o-xylene from chlorinated o-xylene since it has been established that closely relate homologs, analogs and isomers in chemistry may create a prima facie case of obviousness. *In re Dillon* 16 USPQ 2d 1897, 1904 (Fed. Cir. 1990); *In re Payne* 203 USPQ 245 (CCPA 1979); *In re Mills* 126 USPQ 513 (CCPA 1960); *In re Henze* 85 USPQ 261 (CCPA 1950); *In re Haas* 60 USPQ 544 (CCPA 1944).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the Zorn process by operating the process at atmospheric atmosphere to arrive at the claimed process since it is expected that operating the Zorn process at any pressure would yield similar results.

The formation of hydrochloride is expected during the step o-xylene being produced from 2-chloro-m-xylene.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 9/23/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

The argument that the applicants' claimed process is a single step, in contrast, the process of the prior art requires two steps is not persuasive since (1) applicants do not limit the number of step of the claimed process (2) in the second step of the prior art process, 2-chloro component is dechlorinated in the presence of platinum catalyst.

The argument that applicants' claimed invention relates to hydrodechlorination of chlorinated o-xylene, in contrast, the Zorn process is a process of dechlorination of chlorinated m-xylene is not persuasive since as discussed in the above, these compounds are isomers. It has been established that closely relate homologs, analogs and isomers in chemistry may create a prima facie case of obviousness. *In re Dillon* 16 USPQ 2d 1897, 1904 (Fed. Cir. 1990); *In re Payne* 203 USPQ 245 (CCPA 1979); *In re Mills* 126 USPQ 513 (CCPA 1960); *In re Henze* 85 USPQ 261 (CCPA 1950); *In re Haas* 60 USPQ 544 (CCPA 1944).

The argument that in examples, the claimed process yields in excess of 90 percent of o-xylene in a purity of 98 percent or better is not persuasive since applicants do not claim so in the claims.

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

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A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thuan D. Dang whose telephone number is 571-272-1445. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thu.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenn Caldarola can be reached on 571-272-1444. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Thuan D. Dang
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1764

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thuan D. Dang', is written over the printed name and title.